

June 20, 2012 Meeting - Presidents Report

Last month we took some time to get to know one another which gave me a chance to formulate some thoughts on setting up a Committee Structure that could best fit this Commission, thus serving our Communities better along with the Board of Supervisors. Thanks, to Emma, Roy, and Sandy Eisenberg's transcript of the meeting, I was able to read through all of our remarks and come up with some suggestions and ideas about using all of our talents in various committees.

Commissioner Rios was the first one to begin the discussion he mentioned that he is serving on the Patient Council and on the Patient Advisory Council at Rancho Los Amigos. My suggestion is take those two Councils one step further and to re-activate the Commission's Health Committee, which was, and probably is still a standing committee, and ask two or three individuals from each committee to serve. Then as Chair of the Health Committee you could share the information, gained from the two committees, with us each month or on a bimonthly basis which ever you feel most comfortable. The main purpose of a committee is to identify problems and suggest possible solutions to the Board of Supervisors for possible action from this Commission, if a need exists. Later on I would be very interested in having someone from Rancho come with you to speak about the Art Program as an informational Agenda item in addition to, being a guest on the Disability Network radio program.

Although Commissioner Steve Miller wasn't here for our committee/goals session, Commissioner Colley, I believe that both of you have similar interests. I would like to see the two of you get together and from an ad-hoc Developmental Disabilities Committee, to explore alternatives in preserving the existing programming and services. During my working career I was a counselor at a sheltered workshop so I am aware of the programming needed to support this Disability Group. So I hope that you can also use fellow Board of Directors, to make up your Ad-Hoc Committee and then later on we can add it as a Standing Committee, if there is a substantial interest in doing so. During this past month I personally wrote a letter of support to Assembly Person Holly Mitchell, which is on file in the Office, concerning budget matters, which will affect the Regional Center System and their vendors. The Supportive Employment Program is a Program I believe is operated through the Regional Center system, please correct me if I'm wrong and if funding is withheld from the Regional Center's Budget, persons utilizing regional center programs will have no chance to move on to any type of Substantial Gainful Activity or Employment, either through Regional Center or the Department of Rehabilitation.

Commissioner Reitnouer spoke of her interest in reading and recording books at the Braille Institute for the Blind and Dyslexic. These populations have been very much unrepresented on this Commission in relation to the blind community. This seat has not been filled for several years. Commissioner Ruth Ann Accosta and her husband, Commissioner Robert Accosta were members of this in years past. I would like to see you get together with either of them, Staff, Emma or Roy will put you in touch with them so that you can meet or talk on the phone to discuss issues of concern related to Blindness to bring back to the Commission. Although you didn't mention it you have brought some very good ideas to the Events Committee and you even brought a guest who has agreed to assist us this year, with the judging of the Art Contest which has helped Vice President Neal very much and we both are looking forward to her involvement this year.

Which brings up another point which I should make myself very clear by no means am I trying to restrict anyone to their own Committee, we all need to work together and support the work of each committee as a whole, and use our talents to assist one another. As I remember it the original committees, when I was first appointed were Education, Employment, Health Services and Transportation and have essentially remained intact until now except name changes.

Commissioner Teran, Commissioner Neal has informed me that you have provided her with valuable information through various means which has been a tremendous effort on your part. Janet is always looking for more assistance, for years now she has been doing it single handedly and I would like to see more commitment from everyone on this Commission.

Commissioner James, I would like to see you continue with me on the Education Committee as it relates to your current job in EOP&S at Pierce College. I would also like you to investigate how the EOP&S Program can assist persons with disabilities at Pierce. I'd be interested in having you give a presentation as an informational agenda item one of these months. Next year I hope that some of your students will apply for our Scholarships. You serve a population that can benefit most from our Bernard Siegel/Bill Tainter program.

I hope that Commissioner Miller can take a few moments during the announcement portion of our agenda to address the LAUSD - Adult Education issue again and provide us with a quick update if you think there is a need. As during my drowsing hours, in the evening and in the morning I have been hearing conflicting reports concerning the Adult Education Program within LAUSD.

May I remind you that next Tuesday, June 26th will be our Bernard Siegel/Bill Tainter Scholarship presentation in front of the Board of Supervisors, Vice President Neal will provide more information, in her Committee Report, but I hope that all of us can attend this most inspirational event. Your attendance will help provide support of the Awardees, their Parents, the Board of Supervisors, and Vice President Neal, who has put countless hours in this activity for us, in addition to Staff.